(ख) विषैली गैस रिसने से संबंधित तथ्यों और गैस रिसन के परिणामस्वरूप जीवन प्रणाली पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों के कुछ पहलुओं पर वैज्ञानिक खोज कर रही संस्थानों द्वारा इन निर्देशनों का पालन किया जा रहा है । न्यायालयों में कानूनी मामलों के रूके होने के कारण और वैज्ञानिक खोजों से पूर्व अपरिक्व वक्तव्यों को टालने की दृष्टि से यह गोपनीयता आवश्यक है ।

(ग) खोजों के पूर्ण होने से पूर्व सम्मति के परिणामस्वरूप भ्रान्ति टालने के लिये उपाय विशेष रूप ये लाभदायक समझे जाते हैं ।

Review of Freight Equalisation Policy

2475. SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the policy of freight equalisation for iron and steel, the telescopic freight rate for movement of coal, in the absence of similar measures ki other vital industrial inputs have affected the industrial growth in the eastern region, particularly in West Bengal ;

(b) whether there is any likelihood of any rt vie w of the said policy soon;

(c) if so, the time by when a review is likely to be made ; and

(d) if the reply to part (b) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) It is difficult to attribute industrial growth in a particular region/ State to freight equalisation policy. The telescopic freight structure applies to the movement of all cornmo-ditks by rail including coal.

(b) to (d) The National Transport Policy Committee, having wider terms of reference, examined *he issue of fricght equalisation and endorsed the view that freight equalisation in industrial commodities did not meet the desirable objective of dispersal of economic activity. The Committee submitted its report in 1980 and recommended that existing schemes of freight equalisation be phased out gradually. The Government have already agccepted, in principle, the recommendation of this Committee to phase out gradually the existing freight equalisation scheme in respect of goods like steel and cement subject to subsidisation of transport for remote, inaccessible and isolated areas. Phasing out of freight equalisation will have to be done over a suitable period of time so that the industries concerned have sufficient time for adjustment in the prices. Modalities and time phasing of the withdrawal of the freight equalisation scheme in respect of iron and steel have not yet been finalised. No proposal for review of the telescopic freight structure for coal is envisaged.

Computer Literacy Programme in Schools

2476. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) what is the latest assessment of computer literacy programme in schools;

(b) whether the target of schools for introduction and running of the said programme has been reduced and if so, to what extent; and

(c) what schemes are being launched to manufacture software for educational programmes ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE, (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL) : (a) Assessment of Computer Literacy Programme (CLASS Project) in

schools is being done on a continuing basis by Government. The latest appraisal in this regard can be summarised as under :—

(i) The single most encouraging aspect of the project is the tremendous enthusiasm among the students in all the schools, whether they were in the cities or in the mofussil areas. There was a lot of keenness in learning about this new machine and its capabilities.

(2) The students belonged to the science stream mainly. The school authorities have already been informed that computer awareness can be equally useful to student belonging to the science, arts and commerce streams. A much larger number of students than actually selected would like to learn about computers, but it is difficult to imagine how the programme can be broadbased with the existing constraints of limited resources, paucity of trained teachers, limited hours of computer usage outside the schools hours etc.

(3) The enthusiasm of the students is overwhelming but their manipulative skills of the computer are directly proportio-
snate to the interest their teachers how and the proficiency they are able to impart. Thus, the need for motivated teachers cannot be over emphasised for the success of this proje et.

(4) The computer room is a true reflection of the resources available with schools and impor tance the school management gives to the project. Most schools have spent the funds for the preparation of rooms well. They have freshly painted the walls and provided curtains for the widows to keep the direct sun and dust out. Some schools have put fresh tiles on the flooring whereas some have put a coir carpet to absorb the dust. Some affluent Technical,, Teachers train ing Institutes have airconditioned the room whereas in a small town, a Government school requested for extra funds to install an exhaust fan and to spread a carpet. Almost all schools insist on removing foot-ware before entering the computer room. Regarding display of printed material further elaboration is needed, although a few schools have done well in this respect. Some of the schools appeared over enthusiastic in implementing the programme and in the process, lost some essential details. Constant guidance is being given to schools in this respect.

(5) It is felt that the success of the project will be direcUy related to the motivation and active participation of the teachers associated with the project. The teachers will be acting as catalysts to a series of chain reactions covering a large number of students all over the country. This was evident from the fact that the children in some schools were trying an innovative approach to derive maximum benefit from the computers, e.g., generating the notes of the national anthem or to create Devnagari Script alphabet. On the other hand, in schools where the teachers lacked interest, the students were at a loss to explain what the computers were supposed to do.

(6) The performance of most of the hardware was largely satisfactory. Some minor technical flaws located from time to time are r ectifkd speedily.

(7) Most of the software floppies were found of great interest by students. In case of some vernacular schools, the students explained the problems in their own languages. It is felt that comprehension would be better if software in local languages is generated. Efforts are on in this direction.

(8) It is felt that great care should be taken in the selection of teacher trainers and software developers for their training in India

or abroad. Teachers with overt interest, aptitude, sense of participation and motivation for the project may achieve more in terms of students performance.

(9) The implementation of I the project even under difficult circumstances such as late receipt of hardware, the vast expanse of the country *etc.,* has been commendable. Further improvement in communication among the implementing agencies like NCERT, DOE, CME/SCL and State Governments would ensure *he success of expansion phase also. The evolution of a management information system will help to monitor the project more effica ciously and lend the project to periodical evaluation This will enable j all the concerned agencies to take corrective action whenever necessary The entire process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation will be interlinked more meaningfully and thus, facilitate the extrapolation 1 of project in a systematic manner.

(10) The UK aid has been indisputably very useful. In future, emphasis is to be in the field af Training of Teacher Trainers, software developers, improvements in hardware and relevant software packages. In a country like ours with scarce resources, the hardware and software given to schools is to be utilised to the optimum. It should be available to all the students of the school for use whenever the school authorities feel they can be exposed to the computers. On weekends students of other schools, parents and anyone interested may be invited to see the working of the computer-;. Making teachers available I for supervision and instruction at / some extra compensation to them is a small cost the society would be • paying' for throwing open the frontiers of knowledge to all those interested to explore far and wide.

(11) It must be stated that the three objectives of the CLASS Project like demystification, familiarization and hands-on experience have been fully achieved.

(b) Targets for the number of schools to be covered in the CLASS Programme was 250 in 1984-85 and 500 in 1985-86 , both of which have been kept without any reduction.

(c) The National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) has been nominated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development as the nodal agency for coordination of training of school teachers and development of educational computer software under the project—Computer Literacy and studies in Schools (CLASS). Under an educational computer software deve lopment framework prepared by NCERT in collaboration wih the CLASS Resource Centres and the software industry, NCERT has introduced five software packages developed by CMC, which includes a Hindi package in the schools. Another seven packages developed indigenously are in the process *o£* introduction in the pilot schools this year.

In order to ensure quality and standard of educational software produced indigenously, NCERT has recently ciiculated the educational software specifications for the benefit to the software industry. It is proposed to introduce 100 indigenously produced educational packages covering the existing Curricular areas and cross Curricular ideas for the secondary and higher secondary stages in the plan period. In addition, steps have been initiated by NCERT for the formulation of computer studies and computer based vocational elective courses at the higher secondary level with appropriate software in conformity witli the objective of these courses.

INDIANS AND PAKISTANIS IN PAKISTANI AND INDIAN JAILS

2477. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:

SHRI SHANKAR SINH VAGHELA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to ans-